rains. The ryots with meagre income are the worst affected and so is the case with the weavers. The Central Government should send survery teams to asses the damage to the crops, irrigation tanks, roads and houses. Relief operations should start on a war footing to render help to these people.

The farmers should be given seeds and fertilizers at subsidised prices. They should also be given agricuL.T.ural loans free of interest. the Government should also help them in getting insurance claims on the basis of village-wise damage instead of the existing basis of region-wise damage, with more than fifty villages or so.

Roads are badly damaged due to heavy rains and floods and also due to the stagnation of water. The Government should come forward with a liberal hand and grant the aid required to the tune of Rs. 300 crores.

In East Godavari, the train services are not satisfactory. Several passenger trains are discontinued recently and express trains which are discontinued during the Border trouble are not introduce again. I request that all these train services should be introduced again. Important stations such as Rajahmudry and Dwarapudi used to have haL.T.s for express trains previously. Now they do not enjoy this facility. There is not Emergency Quota reservation in Ist AC and II AC reservations at Rajahmundry which is an important railway station in the South Central Railway. No one bothers to listen to our requests, though we are here to represent the people and ventilate their grievances. The bureaucrats execute things as they wish and not even a single request that I proposed in the Railway Convention Committee, has been acceded to by them. I request the Railway Minister to look into the matter and give a favourable decision.

[*Translation*]

SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH (Mirzapur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Shri Mohan Badola is renowned journalist the country. Times of India Group appointed him Resident Editor in Lucknow. He worked successfully... (*Interruptions*)... After about one year of his term a man asked him to sign an affidavit..... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Will the industrial matters be discussed here?

SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH: It is related not to industries but to a renowned journalist of the country... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Is it such an important issue to be discussed here? The Government is not concerned about it, so it cannot be discussed in the House.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: It may be a matter of concern but not an issue to be discused in the Hc ɔse

[*English*]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Mr. Speaker Sir, I wish to raise a very important issue. The entire House is aware that the doctors who were on strike from the beginning of November, called off their strike when an appeal was made to them by all the political parties. We requested them to withdraw their strike on the assurance of the HeaL.T.h Minister that he would look into their grievances sympathetically. On 28th November, the representatives of various political parties were present at the office of the HeaL.T.h Minister. I had the occasion to be present there and the doctors also came there. They responded to our appeal and withdrew the strike unconditionally only on the basis that the hon. Minister's

assurance will be kept. The hon. Minister said, I am quoting from the Minister's statement, "It will be a settlement and not a compromise. I will personally look after all your grievances with an open mind and we will sympathetically look after your grievances."

Unfortunately, the experience of doctors and their representatives, from 28th Novembers to 18th December, is absolutely dismal. They find that there is not an iota of attempt on the part of the hon. Minister to even respond to the problems that have been the subject matter or which prompted or compelled them to go and strike. Even the simple issue of what happen to the adjustment of the period of strike has been left over. Not a single issue is determined. From yesterday they have again gone on indefinite hunger strike.

Now, they have come to us saving that they responded to the request made by different political parties and also to the request made by the hon. Minister so, now it is our responsibility to see that the matter is resolved. What shall we do? It was done in our presence. The Minister is just casually holding discussions with them. After all, they are also responsible people. We requested them that since it is a matter of the sufferings of the patients and as the Minister has assured that he will consider their demands sympathetically and with an open mind, they should withdraws their strike. But nothing has been done. From 28th November to 18th December, three weeks have elapsed. Now, they say that they are really atoning the sin of accepting our request by going on a hunger strike near Raj Ghat.

Therefore, we demands that there should be an immediate response and a genuine attempt should be made to remove their difficuL.T.ies and their problems, so as to arrive at a settlement. Let there be no further aggravation of the situation. Hon. HeaL.T.h Minister is not here. The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs is present here. I am sure he will take at least this matter seriously.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: Sir, I have also given a notice on this.

MR. SPEAKER: You hear me first. The Minister of Parliament Affairs wants to respond. But, whether he would like to respond immediately after Somnath ji or he would like to respond after some other Members have spoken I think it is better if we hear some other hon. Members.

[*Translation*]

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI (Gandhi Nagar): Mr .Speaker, Sir, it is an issue which has compelled us to think as to whether we should intervene is such matters in future or not. Because I am aware that the doctors at that time had said again and again that Government's only interest was somehow to get the strike called of but they also knew that once their strike was called off, the Government would not listen to their problems. We told them that the session was going on and the Members knew that the demands and the difficuL.T.ies of the doctors were genuine and the members of opposition supported them, the Government also wanted some time to look into the problem. We assured them that we will again approach the Government. But the doctors did not agree and related their old experience that on an earlier occasion they had called off their strke and kept quiet in the matter but the Government acted on the advice of the officers. The same thing would be repeated. We thought that if the doctors did not work, patients would be in difficuL.T.y. Therefore, we pursuaded them to call off their strike and assured them that justice will be done to them. They called off the strike. But it appears that no progress has been made so far in the matter, the government has not taken

any action. The situation has not changed at all. You must be remembering that I had requested the Government at that time that it should withdraw the notice and office memorandum filed in the Supreme Court, then the doctors would be prusuaded to call off their strike but the Government refused to do so. However, Government gave an assurance to review the matter again. The doctors called off their strike only on the basis of this assurance.

They are very senior doctors, some of them have only five years to retire and they have taken a big risk by going on strike.

I think that it is a great injustice to them and if the Government does not take appropriate measures it will have to face the consequences. People will no more have confidence on the Government and it would be difficuL.T. for us to intervene in such circumstances.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH (Sheohar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was present there and the members of Congress party were also there when talks were held with the members of the opposition.

Government is losing its credibility and it will lose it in future also but we seek your protection to safeguard our credibility. Their demands are genuine, and the Government is to decide whether it would fulfil their demands in a dignified manner or not.

[*English*]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE (Dumdum): Sir, at that time all of us were worried. Because, the pain was on the patients that is those who were visiting the hospital. Therefore we feL.T. that it would be our duty to see that the doctors should not go on strike. But they feL.T. that they have no confidence on the the Government. They wanted an assurance from Members of Parliament. Today, they are not inflicting any pain or any suffering on the people outside. They have started the *Satyagraha* mode, inflicting pain on themselves by going on an indifinite hunger strike. I am not particularly worried whether or not the Government has to face disgrace because for the last forty years, they are used to face disgrace continuously. But it is the question of credibility on the Parliament institution itself. Because, the promises were made in the House, the Members of Parliament were asked to be whiteness to the understanding that a settlement would come before the 15th or 16th of December and that has not come. It is not the question of Parliamentary Affairs Minister only. I feel, Sir, in all humility, that it devolves on you also, whether or not, you are in a position to admonish them to keep their commitments which are made inside the Parliament and before the Member of Parliament.

MR. SPEAKER: You quote the rules and tell me, under what rule I can admonish them.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: It is under convention. Sir, is it not true that we always go beyond rules and depend on conventions?

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Barkura): Propriety.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Sir, the fact that you are enquiring about the rules shows that you are annoyed. You are not happy about it.

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not put that interpretation.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN (Rosera): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to submit that the present Government gives assurances

only. So far as assurances are concerned there have been several occasions in the House when the Government sought the cooperation of the opposition whenever it was in difficuL.T y. But afterwards it backs out. It is also a similar case. I would like to submit seriously to Shri Kumarmangalam and also to the Government that they should give every stat· nent outside or inside the House in a very responsible maner, and if they cannot do so they should not give false assurance to gain cheap popularity. In this connection, all the members of the ruling party as well as the opposition have similar views. At that time the Government not only expressed their sympathy but also assured that the problem will be solved. But what to talk of finding a solution to the problem, they have not even held talks with doctors in proper way. What happened yesterday was neither in the interests of doctors nor patients. Therefore, Government should take the matter seriously and take measures to fulfil the promise they made.

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have a small feeling that some Members of the Opposition obviously knew that the Government has already taken a decision and that is why, this issue has been raised today.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: No. How do we know about this?

SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM: Sir, if I may submit, I think some of the charges traded.....

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Our affection is not going to absolve him from this type of snide remarks.

SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM: Some of the charges have been very strong on this account, saying that we are not being responsible on the one hand, our assurances not being met, etc. I would like to, at the outset clarify that the Government has kept every assurance it has given and with regard to doctors, let me tell you, that a decision has been taken, which is very favourable to the doctors and, in fact, today the talks will most probably take place and everything would be settled and I do wish to thank the hon. Members.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: Then give me time. What is the problem?

SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM: There is no question of time.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Doctor have been staying Dharna since yesterday.

[*English*]

SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM: If this is the way one is allowed to speak, I do not know how to complete.

MR. SPEAKER: Let him complete. Do not be unhappy when he is giving a factorable reply.

SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM: I very sorry, Sir,...

MR. SPEAKER: Do not demote me!

SHRI RANGARAJN KUMARAMANGALAM: I am very sorry, Sir, Mr. Speaker, Sir, if I may submit, normally what really happens is that when we give a good news it is welcome; even that is hampered. I said that

the Government has decided the matter on favourable terms. In fact, the matter has gone up and it has been decided at the highest level and it is today that the Minister, I presume would be talking to the doctors communicating to them the Government's decision, which I am sure would make them very happy. In fact, the decision has been quite favourable to them. I do not want to spell out the terms because that is mecant to be the terms thats would be speL.T. by the hon. Minister of HeaL.T.h. But I can assure you that tomorrow definitely they will not have this charge standing at all. it would go in favour of doctors.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Kottayam): The NDMC employees have gone on strike for the second time. Last time also some two months back they were on strike. Then this matter was brought before the Home Minister and the Home Minister called a meeting and on the assurance of the Home Minister the strike was called off.

Unfortunately they had to start the strike again. Their demand is to have parity in the pay scales, and regularisation of those employees who are employed on the muster roll.

Yesterday more than 10,000 employees have stayed away from work and the work was at standstill in all the departments of the NDMC. The para-medical staff in the NDMC hospital at Moti Bagh and other dispensaries, civil engineering staff, horticuL.T.ure and all of them were on strike and work in all the departments was at a standstill. I request the Home Minister to take urgent steps so that the striking employees can withdraw their strike. Earlier there was an assurance given but it was not fulfilled. I request the Government to take urgent steps to settle the issue as soon as possible.

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU (Tenali): This is an urgent matter of social justice and public importance pertaining to the landless SC,ST and BC saL.T. producers in Chinaganjam village of Prakasam District in Andhra Pradesh. There is an area of 514.24 acres of land in Survey No. 609 which has hitherto been used for saL.T. production by the small and marginal farmers of SC,ST and BC in that village.

In recent times the Assistant Commissioner, SaL.T., Government of India, Kakinada, has called for tenders from the big farmers to file their tenders so that this land may be leased out. These small and marginal farmers have hitherto been enjoing this land under Category III, that is, free licensing category and these people need not pay any levy or cess on the saL.T. they produce. No I urge upon the Government to kindly direct the Assistant Commissioner, SaL.T., kakinada, to refrain from calling for any tenders and thereby he should not deny these small and marginal farmers their livelihood since they have been cuL.T.ivating this land and producing saL.T. for several years. The land may be leased out in their favour under category III

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia). Sir, we are all aware that we are passing through a service economic crisis and the nationalised public sector banks have an important role to play in that... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Today itself you are discussing the economic situation in the country.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH; There is a big crisis...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please understand that today itself you are dixcussing the economic situation in the country.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: I am not going to speak in that... (*Interruptions*)